

Rare bay cat spotted in Pulong Tau national park

February 11 2011, By Resni Mona



STILL IN EXISTENCE: A camera trap image of the wild bay cat.

A statement by PTNP's project manager Dr. Paul Chai Pang Kiong said three images of the cat had been captured via camera traps by the Forest Department Sarawak and Sarawak Forestry Corporation.

The camera traps were sponsored by Sarawak Timber Association (STA), while PTNP's Phase II project is supported by International Tropical Timber Organisation (ITTO).

“The presence of the bay cat further heightens the importance of PTNP as a reservoir of the highlands' rich biodiversity, of which many species are endemic, rare and/or threatened,” said Dr. Chai in the statement. He said the bay cat is an endemic species categorised as endangered on the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN)'s Red List.

The bay cat is also listed in Appendix II of Convention on International Trade on Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES), and is totally protected in Sarawak.

“A mature bay cat is normally the size of a large domesticated cat albeit with an extra long tail. It has two colour morphs, with the reds much more common than the greys.

“The last photograph of the wild bay cat in Sarawak was also captured by camera traps in Lanjak Entimau Wildlife Sanctuary in a joint study initiated by Unimas in 2003. Other than that, most other information consists of historical records, morphological descriptions and anecdotes from various sources,” he said. PTNP is located in Sarawak’s northern highlands in Miri and Limbang Divisions, northeast of Sarawak.

The park was gazetted in 2005 to protect an area of about 60,000 ha of pristine rainforests. It includes Mount Murud, Sarawak’s highest peak at 2,424m and the Tama Abu Range.

“It is the site for the transboundary biodiversity conservation project with the Kayan Mentarang National Park in East Kalimantan. The project is supported by the ITTO with Forest Department Sarawak as the Implementing Agency,” he said.

Provided by Universiti Malaysia Sarawak

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